

DATE: June 12, 2002

SITE: Baker Recreation Center, 209 West Page Street

MEMBERS PRESENT: Altin Paulson, Jill Danner, Terry Huntrods, Ken Mauer, John O'Halloran, Heidi Welsch

MEMBERS ABSENT: William Dunnigan (excused)

STAFF PRESENT: Bob Bierscheid, Patricia Freeman, Mike Rossberg

1. AGENDA, MINUTES, INTRODUCTIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

C Chair Paulson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

C The agenda was approved as revised.

C The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as written.

2. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

C The total reduction in the approved 2002 budget was \$430,000. Efforts were made to keep program and employee cuts to a minimum. The Division has proposed that the holiday lights program be moved out of its budget.

C Mr. Bierscheid made use of a powerpoint presentation to discuss his plans for Division accreditation. He noted that his former place of employment, Roseville Parks and Recreation, had been one of the first cities to receive Commission for the Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) accreditation, and he has acted as a CAPRA site visitor for six other cities seeking accreditation. There are now 33 accredited agencies with another 10 or so in the pipeline. Agencies receiving accreditation have ranged from towns as small 6,000 to jurisdictions as large as Chicago and Miami Dade County. Among the 156 CAPRA standards, 40 are considered mandatory, while an agency must meet 85% of the remaining 116 in order to be accredited. Saint Paul should

includes a self-evaluation followed by a visit from a CAPRA audit team. If accreditation is received, it will be good for five years, after which time it will have to be reacquired.

- C The benefits from this process follow from exposing the Division to nationally recognized best practices in the field. It will produce accountability, efficiencies and a sense of teamwork. The process will take some time, expose the Division to the risk of falling short of the standards and cost a few thousand dollars. This contrasts with the cost of about \$100,000 to hire professional analysts to perform similar evaluative functions. Much of the value of the initiative is derived from staff buy-in. It is hoped the Division can successfully complete the process and receive its accreditation at the NRPA Congress in October, 2003.
- C A motion was made and seconded to approve Resolution 02-16 in which the Commission “urges the Council of the City of Saint Paul to authorize the Division of Parks and Recreation to commence participation in the Commission for the Accreditation of Parks and Recreation Agencies program.” The motion was passed 6-0.
- C Mr. Bierscheid noted that the financial report the Commissioners received about Highland Golf Course contained a mix of more conservative and more aggressive forecasts. The outlook is still positive and in line. The issue of what to do with the Rice and Arlington Dome has been separated from the financing of the golf course.

3. COMMISSION STRUCTURE AND ACTIVITIES

- C The Commission agreed to address items requiring Commissioner Paulson’s participation before proceeding to Advocacy Issues.
- C The Commissioners suggested several possible destination points for the August facility tour, including Kids Park at Groveland, Crosby Park and Hidden Falls, the area below the 35E bridge proposed for an off-leash dog area, recreation centers where there have been a demographic shift, and the Highland High School athletic fields. The Commission asked that staff prepare a complete itinerary for their review at the July meeting.
- C Mr. Bierscheid noted the retirement party for Vic Wittgenstein had been scheduled for Harriet Island Park on July 10, the same day as the next Commission meeting. After discussing a range of alternate dates, the Commission agreed it would be best to meet for an hour at 5:30 p.m. at the Wigington Pavilion on July 10.
- C Commissioner Paulson expressed his support for seeking awards. Awards help recruit volunteers and add to an organization’s image and prestige. Mr. Bierscheid noted the Division had recently received a Minnesota Recreation and Parks Association Award of

Excellence for its program, “A Night Out.” Several suggestions were made for possible awards. The Commission asked that staff bring specific ideas about what awards could

be pursued to the July meeting. Possible ideas included Jill Danner and the Arlington-Arkwright Off-Leash Dog Area, Terry Huntrods for his efforts at Como Park, the Harriet Island renovation, the Phalen Boulevard project, and the Shepard Road trail project.

- C Concerning the July 8 Long-Range Planning Subcommittee meeting, Commissioner Paulson reviewed the Commission's 2002 goals and his efforts to set up a meeting with the Mayor, and asked for information about recreation center operating costs.
- C Commissioner Paulson excused himself from the meeting. Vice Chair Welsch assumed the duties of Chair.

4. ADVOCACY ISSUES

- C Ms. Freeman distributed a handout detailing Division environmental strategies. Included are the need to pursue internal partnerships, partnerships with outside agencies, grant writing and staff training. Examples of partnering with outside agencies include efforts to control milfoil at Phalen Beach and manage the overabundance of deer in the eastern part of the city. She recommended a coordinated cross-departmental approach to environmental stewardship. In the future, the Division needs to develop an evaluation plan, build maintenance capacity, improve staff education and accelerate community outreach efforts.
- C Ms. Freeman indicated there was no new information to share about vistas.

5. SUBCOMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS

- C Commissioner Huntrods observed that the Governor's veto of \$3.2 million for the Como Park Education Resource Center created a big problem for those concerned with this project.
- C Commissioner Welsch volunteered to write a monthly feature article about parks and recreation which could be sent out to local newspapers. Mr. Rossberg noted these articles could be circulated internally through the Support Services newsletter. The Commission expressed its approval of this idea.

6. ADJOURNMENT

- C The meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.